

Clan Adopts Democratic Rule To Take A New Chief

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Members of the MacAulay clan have established a democratic process for the election of their chief, which could be a blueprint for other disbanded clans.

The momentous decision was taken after a lively debate on the subject that the 2002 gathering of the MacAulay clans at Tulloch Castle Hotel in Dingwall yesterday afternoon.

Clan Secretary Hector MacAulay said the clan had disintegrated more than 200 years ago and many years of research had failed to trace the bloodline of its former chiefs.

The clan decided the way forward was to select a new chief and create a new blood line.

It was decided that the clan commander, Ian McMillan MacAulay, who is in his early Eighties, should take on the role, but Lord Lyon, Robin Blair, rejected his appointment to the chief ship.

Hector MacAulay said; "This was despite the fact that he had been commander for five years and the World wide clans supported him one hundred per cent."

The Lyon ruled that a clan commander with no proven blood link to a past chief must serve in that appointment for 10 years before being proposed for chiefship. The clan had been keen to unite the Macaulay clans of Lewis, Lochbroom and Ardencaple, near Helensburgh, but the Lord Lyon's ruling claimed that to recognise the chief of the Ardencaple MacAulays as clan chief would disenfranchise many members who originated from other branches. Disappointed by this ruling, clan members decided to look for another way forward and they yesterday considered a resolution to confirm Ian McMillan Macaulay as clan chief and put in place a democratic process whereby the chief would be elected by all clan members for a period of five years.

This was passed by members, and Ian MacMillan MacAulay will be their chief for the next four years because he was elected last year. There will then be an election if anyone wishes to stand against him. If not, he will be automatically re-elected. The resolution also said that the chief should be resident in Scotland, but this was not agreed upon. Hector MacAulay said that, although clan members overseas were keen that the clan should have its roots in Scotland, with the chief resident in the country, there was a strong feeling that there were clan members in other parts of the world who would make very good chiefs. A further resolution, put forward by the Association in Australia, was to maintain the status quo and wait another five years for the Lord Lyon's approval of Ian McMillan Macaulay, of Drumbeg, as chief. Hector MacAulay said this resolution had been decisively defeated. He said the situation had been closely watched by a number of other disbanded clans, which are beginning to resurrect themselves.

"There is a lot of interest from abroad in resurrecting these clans and they don't know how to elect a chief, so we are trying to lead the way. This is probably the first time that the clan has set up the democratic process to elect its chief in this way and it could be the way forward for other clans," he said.